

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 VO-03 SCA-01
INSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/091 W

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R 261424Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1472
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY OSLO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL GOTEBORG POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, SW
SUBJ: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: SWEDISH RESPONSE

REF: (A) STATE 190638 (NOTAL), (B) STOCKHOLM 3409 (NOTAL)

1. POLCOUNS TOOK UP AGAIN THE GOS RESPONSE TO OUR AUGUST 16 APPROACH ON THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE SITUATION IN A MEETING WITH MFA INDOCHINESE AFFAIRS OFFICER SVEN HIRDMAN ON AUGUST 25. HIRDMAN INDICATED ONCE MORE THAT SWEDISH ABILITY TO HANDLE ADDITIONAL REFUGEES AT THIS TIME IS PRACTICALLY NIL GIVEN THE UNUSUALLY LARGE INFLUX EARLIER THIS YEAR OF ATIN AMERICANS (MAINLY FROM ARGENTINA AND CHILE) AND ASSYRIANS. HE ALSO REITERATED THE VIEW THAT IT WAS GOS POLICY AT THIS TIME NOT TO ASSUME OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT INDOCHINESE REFUGEES.

2. HAVING DWELLED ON THE NEGATIVE, HIRDMAN THEN HANDED POLCOUNS
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A COPY OF RECENT LETTER FROM MFA TO SWEDISH AMBASSADOR FALTHEIM IN LUALA LUMPUR (WHO, ACCORDING TO HIRDMAN, HAS ADVOCATED SWEDISH EFFORTS TO HELP EASE THE INDOCHINA REFUGEE CRISIS). THE LETTER IS QUOTED BELOW AS AN EXACT DESCRIPTION OF GOS POLICY ON THE ISSUE. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, THE LETTER'S SECOND PARAGRAPH INDICATES THAT THE GOS IS WILLING "TO CONSIDER, IN A POSITIVE SPIRIT, CONCRETE CASES WHICH THE UNHIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

CONSIDERS TO BE MOST URGENT". FURTHER, THAT THE COMMISSION HAS YET TO EXPLOIT THIS AVENUE IN THAT NO "URGENT" CASES HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO GOS ATTENTION.

3. TEXT OF LETTER IN TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

"ON THE SWEDISH SIDE WE ARE, OF COURSE, CONSCIOUS OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE INCREASING STREAM OF 'BOAT REFUGEES' CREATES FOR THE COUNTRIES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA AND ALSO OF THE TRAGIC SITUATION OF THE REFUGEES. BUT AS IS CLEAR FROM THE DOCUMENT QUOTED BY YOU, WE HAVE EARLIER DECLARED THAT WE DO NOT CONSIDER OURSELVES ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REFUGEE COMMISSION'S SPECIAL ASSISTANCE PLAN FOR THE INDOCHINA REFUGEES. IT IS TRUE THAT SWEDEN HAS RAISED ITS REFUGEE QUOTA BY 500 PERSONS IN NOVEMBER OF LAST YEAR, BUT THEN ONE PRIMARILY HAD THE REFUGEES FROM LATIN AMERICA IN MIND. FURTHERMORE, OUR RESOURCES FOR TAKING CARE OF REFUGEES HAVE, AS YOU KNOW, BEEN HEAVILY TAXED BY THE STREAM OF ASSYRIANS. OUR DECISION NOT TO FURTHER EXTEND OUR UNDERTAKINGS IN THIS AREA IS THEREFORE STILL VALID.

"ON THE OTHER HAND, A SMALLER SHARE OF THE REFUGEE QUOTA IS ALWAYS RESERVED FOR 'URGENT CASES' FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD. WE HAVE THEREFORE DECLARED THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER, IN A POSITIVE SPIRIT, CONCRETE CASES WHICH THE REFUGEE COMMISSIONER CONSIDERS TO BE MOST URGENT. WE ASSUME THAT THIS MESSAGE, WHICH WE HAVE SENT TO THE EMBASSY, HAS BEEN GIVEN TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE REFUGEE COMMISSIONER. AS YOU POINT OUT IN YOUR SEMI-OFFICIAL LETTER, NO SUCH REFUGEE CASES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT UP AS CONCERNS US. THIS IS SUPPOSEDLY DUE TO OUR NOT RECEIVING ANY CONCRETE PROPOSALS FROM THE COMMISSION?

"OUR DECISION NOT TO ASSUME ANY PRINCIPAL OBLIGATIONS THUS IS STILL VALID AT THE SAME TIME AS WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER THE CONCRETE CASES REFERRED TO US BY UNHCR."

4. FROM HIRDMAN'S COMMENTS AND THOSE OF ANOTHER GOS OFFICIAL PRIVY TO THE DELIBERATIONS OF SWEDISH CABINET MEETINGS (WHERE THE ISSUE, WE UNDERSTAND, HAS BEEN DISCUSSED), WE RECEIVE THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT SWEDEN MIGHT NOW BE WILLING TO ACCEPT A SMALL NUMBER OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. THE EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR DISCUSS THIS POSSIBILITY WITH BOTH THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES AND AMBASSADOR FALTHEIM, IN A LOW-KEY, TO ATTEMPT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS APPARENT CRACK IN THE SWEDISH DOOR. WE ASSUME THE DOCUMENTATION OF "URGENT" CASES FOR GOS CONSIDERATION WILL NOT BE THAT DIFFICULT GIVEN THE DIRE REFUGEE SITUATION OVERALL. ONCE PROPOSALS ARE PUT FORTH, THIS EMBASSY STANDS READY TO APPROACH MFA AGAIN TO URGE THAT THE GOS APPROVE REFUGEE ENTRY INTO

SWEDEN.

PERRY

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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